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MIAMI DADE JUNIOR COLLEGE

HILLIARD T. SMITH, JR., AIA

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

TECHNOLOGY IS NOT ENOUGH

Historically, the architect's role is that of skilled designer and master builder, employing many technologies as tools to create human environment having esthetic value and useful purpose. From this oldest of professions have come some of the most significant influences on the history of mankind.

Witness the great works from the temples of Egypt, the Acropolis, all the Seven Wonders of the World, through the magnificent cathedrals of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance to the modern day marvels of high rise construction.

These are the creation of men with the ability to coordinate various technical disciplines into an esthetically pleasing combination of materials satisfying the human and practical requirements of each set of conditions.

These are the creation of men with a dominant drive—a desire —to transform the need for something useful into a significant work, making its contribution to our visual environment.

As our technology has become more sophisticated and our product more complex, knowledge has become fragmented into more and smaller capsules of expertise. Out of this has been created the specialist or one who is authoritative on one part of the whole. Dealing in depth in these capsules of knowledge, these specialists lack the understanding and scope of training to coordinate and translate the many parts into a beautiful and still efficient whole. This skill of coordination requires a thorough and qualified understanding of the science of planning. In buildings, the science of planning is the essence of an ability to successfully bring together esthetic sense and technology. It is this ability to bring together esthetic sense and technology which produces architecture and not just buildings.

Contemporary philosophers have asked if we are in danger of creating a technological wasteland in which our ends are dominated by our means, where technical instruments rather than human considerations determine our course.

The profesison of creating a visual environment fit for human occupancy requires deep understanding of the arts, humanities, social sciences and engineering. Of the professions, only architecture requires such breadth of responsibility and diversity of materials. No other has such direct relevance and responsibility in civic affairs.

If there are some among those with capsules of knowledge who would relegate the environment of our society to a technological wasteland that is devoid of spiritual, moral and human values, we admonish them to heed well the import of such responsibility.

the florida architect
official journal of the florida association of the american institute of architects

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FRONT COVER — DECEMBER 1966 — Traditional time of the year to cast an appraising look over the past year, take an enthusiastic look toward the coming year, and send your heartiest best wishes to all! We do all three — gratefully! Cover masterpiece by El Greco.

VOLUME 16 ■ NUMBER 12 ■ 1966

An Editorial

Sowing The Seeds Of Future

We must practise what we preach!

As members of the Architectural Profession, we urge our clients to employ designs of beauty, to consider scale and harmony, and to cherish open space and natural charm of the environment. Let us do the same with our own National Headquarters.

It has been resolved that the AIA enlarge the present site of the Octagon House, create a new headquarters building, and restore the historic Octagon House as a beautiful landmark of our architectural heritage. Worthy goals — and much needed if we are to continue to represent the finest in creative execllence. Our profession is growing vigorously and this is our proud opportunity to create a worthwhile focal point for future generations — yes, to build for our future.

But, to sow these seeds of the future, our building plans need financial support . . . $900,000.

The AIA asks to receive all pledges by the end of 1966, if possible. A pledge form, like the one shown below, will be available from your own chapter. Your pledge is tax deductible in the 1966 tax year.

THE HARVEST OF SUCCESS

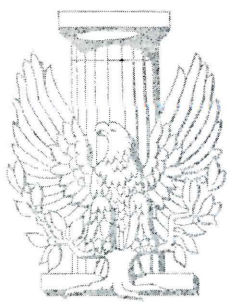
If these seeds are sowed well, what will be harvest? We will bring in a crop of advantages and developments . . . a new headquarters building which will be a fitting 'crown' for our profession and will represent us well in the nation's capitol . . . much-needed office and meeting space . . . the restoration of Octagon House, which it so richly deserves as an early American landmark of residential architecture . . . creation of the Octagon garden . . . and we will have planted and harvested a crop that will still be reaping rich rewards for generations yet to come.

Here is an opportunity for every member of the AIA to make a once-in-a-lifetime investment in the future of his professional society. Let Florida lead the way!

(You may use this form for your pledge.)

American Institute of Architects Foundation, Inc.
Octagon Headquarters Campaign Fund
1735 New York Avenue, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20006

OCTOBER 1966



In consideration of the gifts of others, I pledge to the Octagon House Campaign Fund as follows:

	DOLLARS
TOTAL PLEDGED	$
PAID HEREWITH	$
BALANCE DUE	$

(Make check payable to AIAF)

CONTRIBUTION BY INDIVIDUAL

CONTRIBUTION BY FIRM

(Please Print)

STREET ADDRESS

CITY STATE

CHAPTER

SIGNATURE OF CONTRIBUTOR

If this contribution is made for more than one individual, please list names on reverse side.

BALANCE PAYABLE *(Check appropriate box)*	
ONE INSTALLMENT—1967	
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Do Not Write in This Space

REGIONAL # _____
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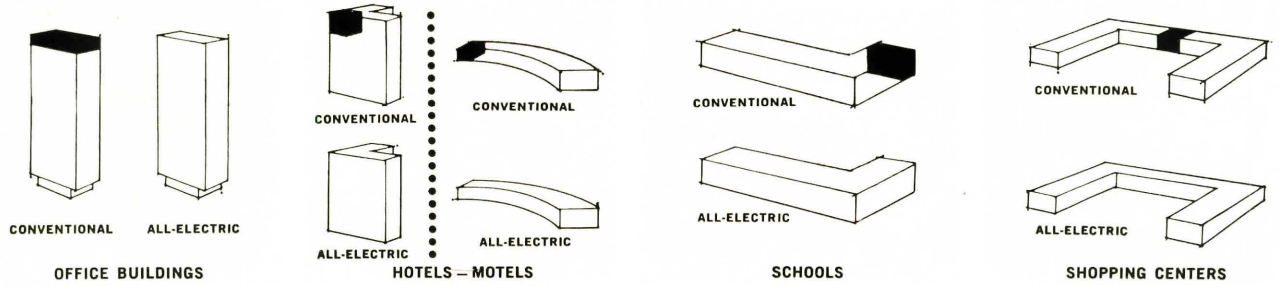
FOR COMMERCIAL CONSTRUCTION!

The ALL-ELECTRIC concept gives you more usable space:



The exploitation of usable, revenue-producing space in commercial buildings is as important to the owner/investor as the exploration of outer space is to world scientists. That's why more and more architects, engineers and builders are specifying ALL-ELECTRIC.

Better and more profitable use of space is the basic advantage of the all-electric concept. This means added income for office buildings, shopping centers, hotels and motels; added capacity for hospitals, nursing homes, medical centers and dormitories; and more classrooms for schools.

Whatever your next commercial project, you owe it to your client to investigate the application and advantages of ALL-ELECTRIC construction!

Alachua	Lakeland
Bartow	Lake Worth
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Ft. Pierce	Ocala
Gainesville	Orlando
Green Cove Springs	Quincy
Havana	St. Cloud
Homestead	Sebring
Jacksonville	Starke
Jacksonville Beach	Tallahassee
Key West	Vero Beach
Kissimmee	Wauchula
Lake Helen	Williston

FMUA **Florida Municipal Utilities Association**

WHEN CONSUMERS OWN, PROFITS STAY AT HOME

A Challenge to AIA Members

Never has there been a time when people within associations needed so urgently to work together to bring their best efforts and abilities to bear on common problems.

The challenges which associations have faced in the past are likely to be dwarfed by the challenges of the future. Technological change, manpower issues, the challenge of competitive industries and expanding government—all these are beating upon us with such insistence that there is hardly time to attend to one emergency before another crisis is upon us.

salty ideas begin with GAS

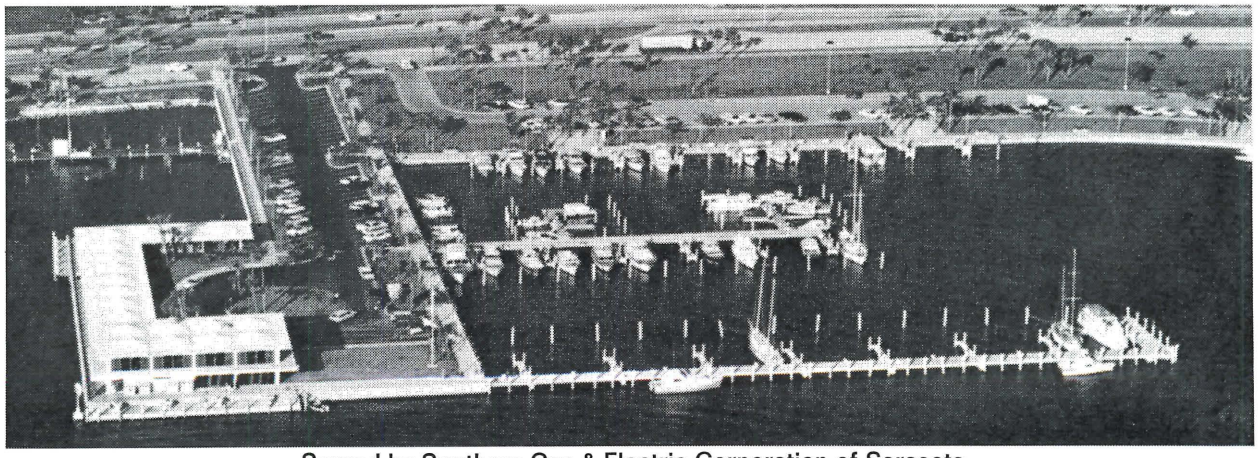
. . . OR HOW A RUUD WATER HEATER KEPT 400 SKIPPERS & THEIR CREWS IN HOT WATER

When over 400 visiting yachtsmen berthed at the million-dollar Marina Mar in Sarasota, Florida last season a RUUD Gas Water Heater was there to take command of the hot water situation.

Providing hot water and showers for all boating enthusiasts who dock here is a never ending job . . . and dependable "Captain" RUUD, the Gas Water Heater meets the challenge by working twenty-four hours a day. From the 300-seat "Upper Deck" restaurant, which also uses Natural Gas in its kitchen for broiler, range, and oven, to the 24-hour "Galley" snack-bar, to the half-dozen shops at dock-side, RUUD is constantly on the go, furnishing hot water from a single Natural Gas Heater.

Isn't this the kind of fast recovery and dependability you want in your water heating?

Check with your local Natural Gas Utility or Gas Appliance dealer . . . "Captain" RUUD has brothers who can go to work for you.



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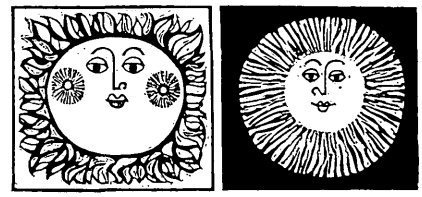


CALENDAR

November 22 - December 4

Palm Beach Chapter, AIA, Architectural Exhibit, Norton Art Gallery, Palm Beach.

November 27 - December 17

FAAIA Architectural Exhibits, La Monte Art Gallery, University of Tampa, Tampa.

December 10

FAAIA Board of Directors meeting, 9:30 a.m., George Washington Hotel, Jacksonville.

December 15

South Florida Chapter of Producers' Council annual Christmas Party, 6:30 pm., Coral Gables Country Club.

December 17

Meeting of the AIA Florida Chapter Presidents, 10 a.m., 1000 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Coral Gables.

January 13 - 14

AIA Grass Roots meeting for Chapter Presidents, Octagon, Washington, D. C.

February 11

FAAIA Council of Commissioners meeting, Miami.

February 25

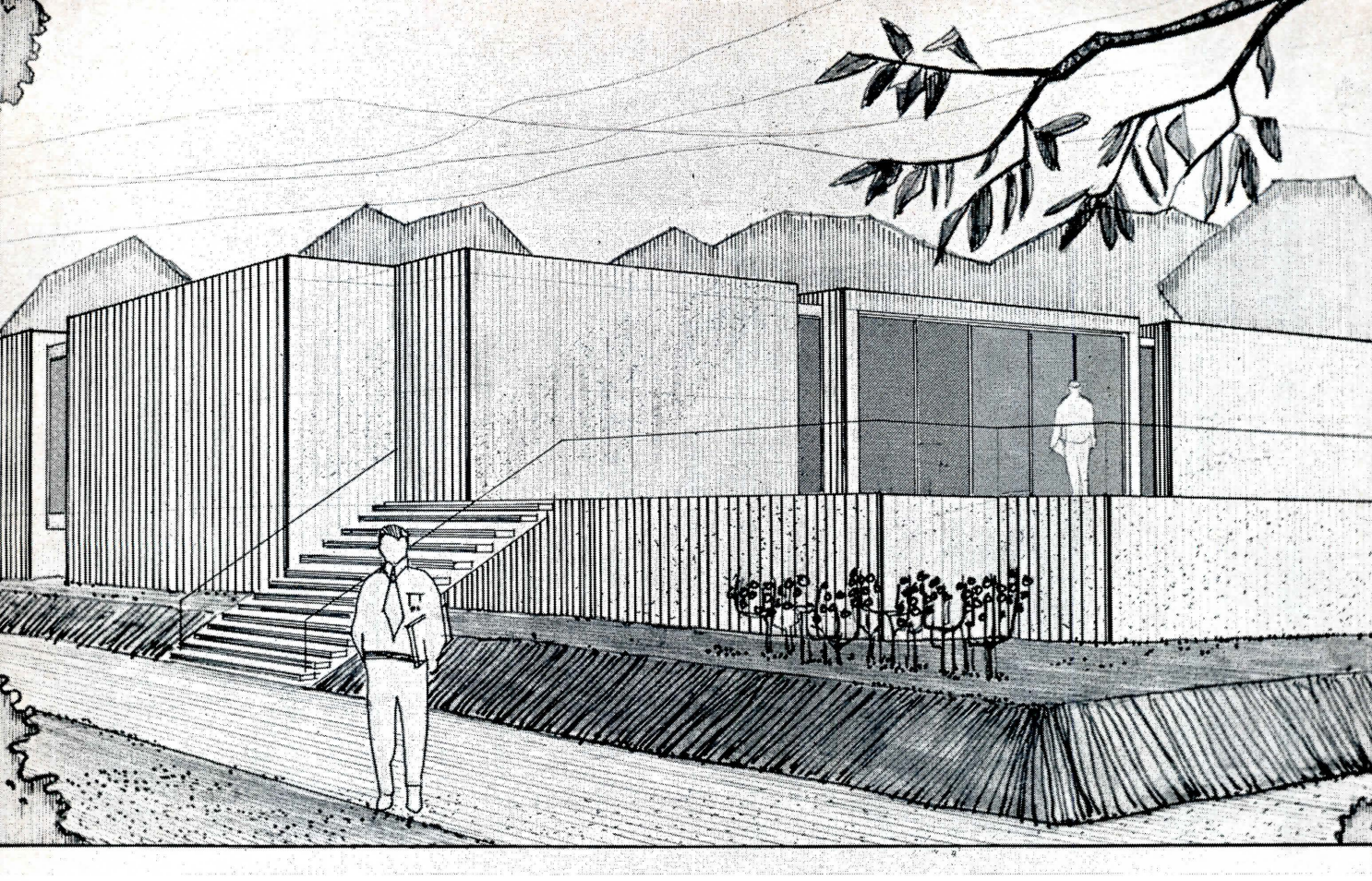
FAAIA Board of Directors meeting, St. Petersburg.

Thank You

One of the real joys of the Holiday Season is the opportunity to say "Thank you" and extend to you our warmest greetings and good wishes for happiness and prosperity all through the coming year.

FLORIDA PORTLAND CEMENT DIVISION

GP CC General Portland Cement Company
PLANTS AND OFFICES IN TAMPA AND MIAMI



FIRST PLACE . . . Charles M. Stewart, University of Miami . . . "for imagination in use of concrete, display of material . . ."

1966 Design Competition Announces Student Winners

The Florida Concrete and Products Association recently announced the winners in its annual competition between the architecture students from the University of Florida and the University of Miami.

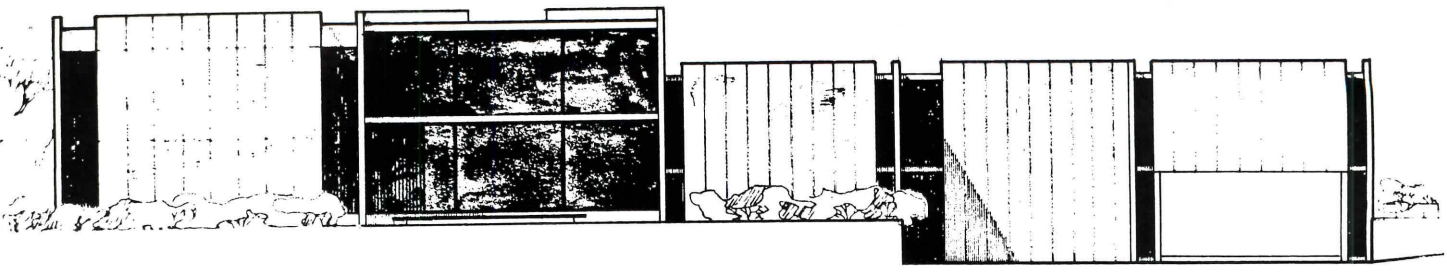
From 20 entries from the two schools, first place honors and $150 went to Charles M. Stewart, University of Miami; second place and $75 to Dennis DeWolf, University of Miami; third place and $50 to William O'Toole, University of Miami; fourth place to Miss Teresita Lascaibar, University of Florida; and, fifth place to Wendell F. Orr, University of Miami.

This fifth annual contest design constituted the problem of designing a State Headquarters Building for the Association using a variety of concrete products and showing them off to their best advantage.

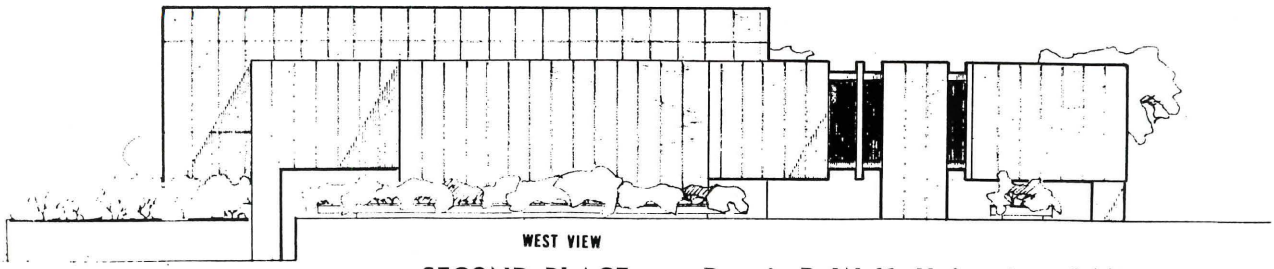
The jury, comprised of Nils Schweizer of Winter Park and Gene Leedy of Winter Haven, also judged the entry of Donald Evans, University of Miami, Honorable Mention on the basis of excellence of presentation.

Commenting on the entries in their critique, the jury stated:

"The projects were critically reviewed without the consideration of the competitor's experience or lack of it, and without thought to his educational development. The projects are critiqued as if they constituted preliminary presentations and were judged accordingly. Certain projects showed definite promise that indicated to the jury that the competitor, if given definite direction, could conceivably develop a competent solution. This attribute was recognized in the judgment."



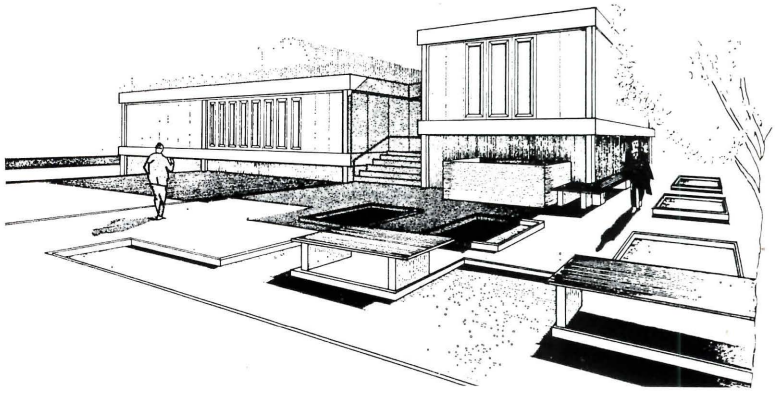
NORTH VIEW

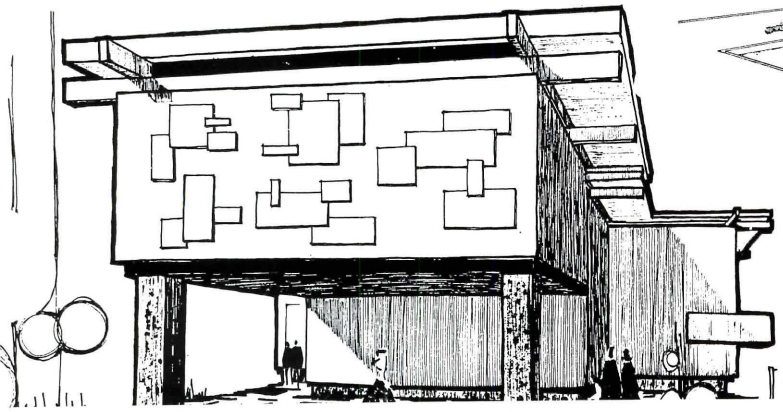


WEST VIEW

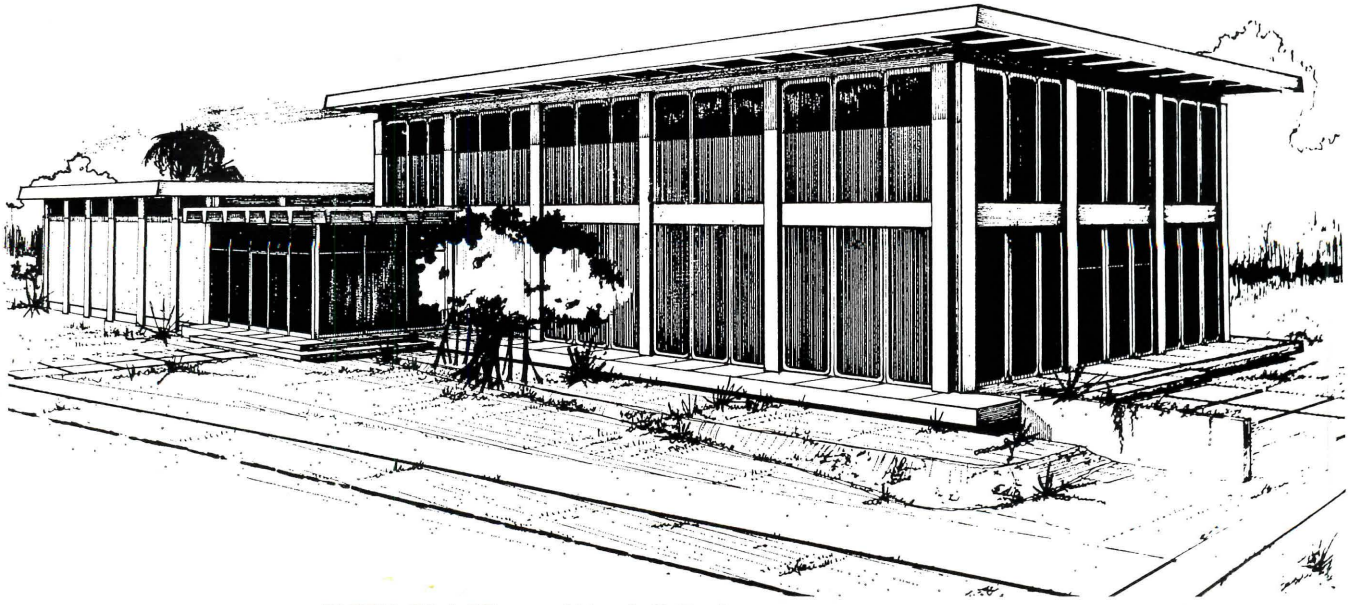
SECOND PLACE . . . Dennis DeWolf, University of Miami

THIRD PLACE . . . William O'Toole
University of Miami

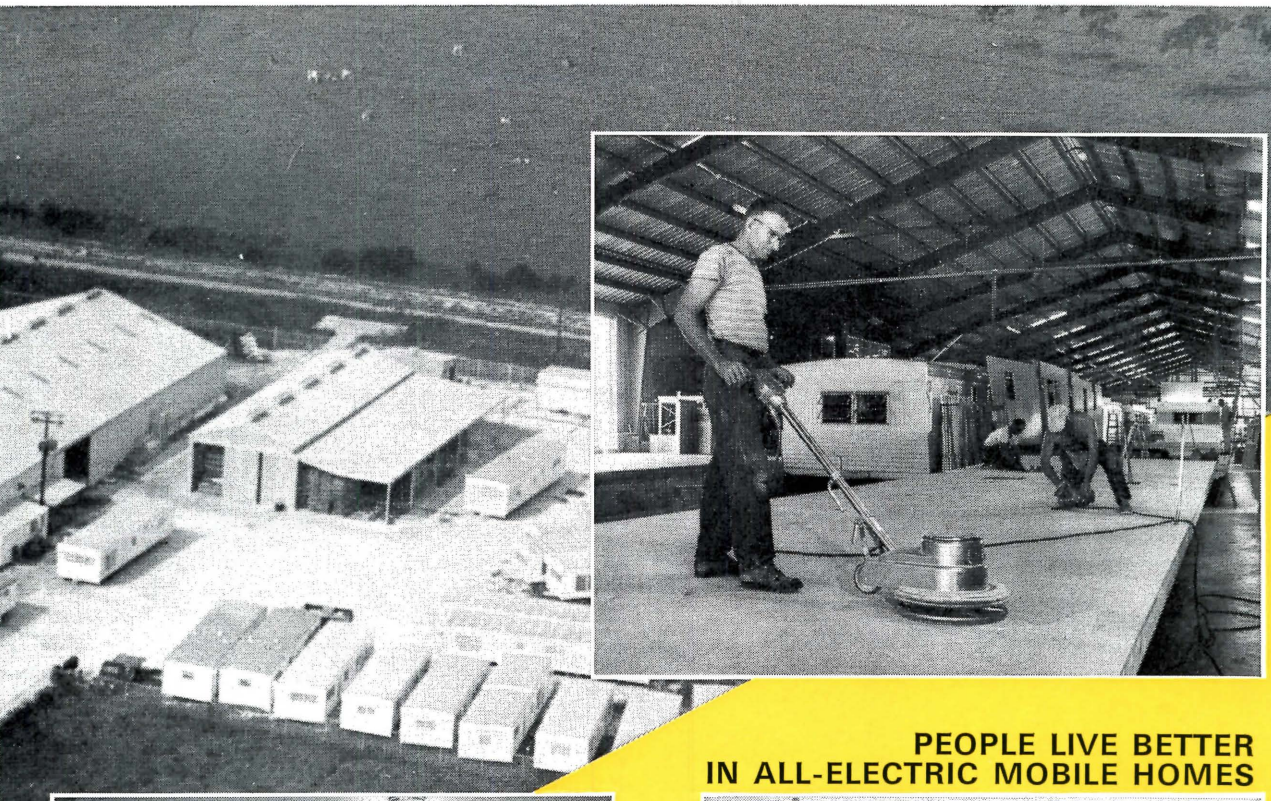




FOURTH PLACE . . . Miss Teresita Lascaibar, University of Florida

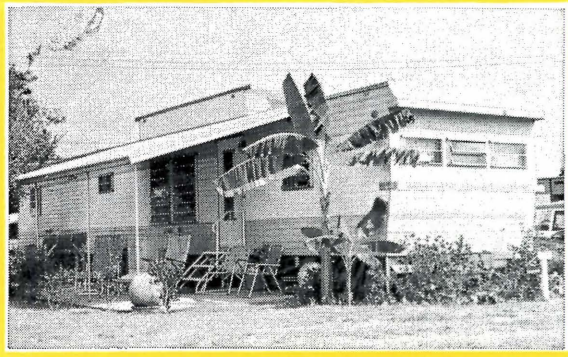


FIFTH PLACE . . . Wendell F. Orr, University of Miami



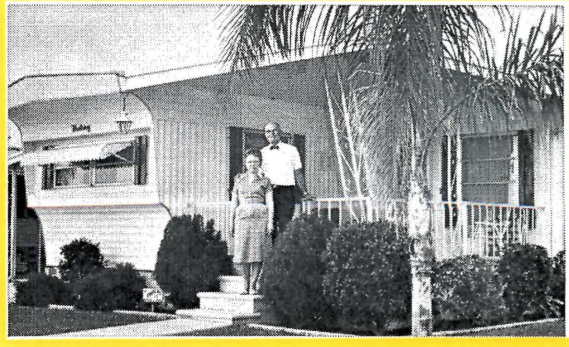
PEOPLE LIVE BETTER IN ALL-ELECTRIC MOBILE HOMES

Year-round electric cooling and heating, as well as an all-electric kitchen, assures carefree, flameless comfort and convenience for Mr. and Mrs. H. H. Zerniko in their mobile home at Bahia Vista Estates Mobile Home Park, Sarasota. "Complete electric living is reliable, clean, economical, safe, and requires no maintenance," says Mr. Zerniko.



Panama City residents, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Stephenson, praise the comfort and economy of electric heating and air conditioning in their total-electric mobile home. "We're especially happy with the cleanliness and complete freedom from worry," they say. The home also has an electric range, electric water heater, electric clothes dryer and washer.

"This elegant custom-built relocateable home is one of many total-electric models at Tampa's Guernsey City. Because we wish to offer our residents the ultimate in comfort and convenience, we now manufacture only all-electric models," says Welburn Guernsey.



"We thoroughly enjoy our all-electric mobile home," say Mr. and Mrs. George Erholm of Glen Ellen Mobile Home Park, Clearwater, Florida. "With our electric heat pump we have automatic temperature control all year long . . . and our mobile home stays so clean! We're sold on all-electric living."

FLORIDA POWER CORPORATION • TAMPA ELECTRIC COMPANY

Architecture, Religion, and Relevance

The Church and Church Architecture are moving but neither architects, clergymen nor congregations seem to know in what direction, if statements made at the recently completed Conference for Church Architecture sponsored by the American Society for Church Architecture are representative of the times. The Conference was held in Chicago this spring and drew attendees from as far away as Connecticut, Florida and Minnesota. Leading speakers including Rabbi Morris Hershman of Joliet Jewish Congregation in Joliet, Illinois, and Rev. Gordon Gilkey of the Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, challenged both architects and clergy in attendance to establish the relevance of church architecture and the relevance of religion before attempting to use architecture as a means of expressing current religious needs, attitudes and directions.

The over-all theme of the conference was Architecture, Religion and Relevance and the need for more detailed discussion of this theme was evidenced by the comments made by Rev. Gilkey who spoke on "Hard Times for Architects and Ministers." "Never before," he said, "have so many local church structures been erected as in recent years; never have so many been designed in so many different shapes and forms, using so many materials and decorated with so many novel symbols. But at the same time never has there been so much criticism both of the volume of church building and the final appearance of the end result." "Today," he said, "there are many unresolved differences of opinion as to what the church building is for and what it should look like."

"We happen to be living," Rev. Gilkey stated, "in a generation of enormous theological and ecclesiastical change . . . the rules of the game have changed not only without warning but without our permission . . . new forms of ministry are needed for the old ones are inadequate. If this is true within the church and synagogue it is equally true within the profession of architecture. The architect can hardly design a building to reflect and symbolize the meaning and function of a religious activity if his clients are unable to provide the definitions he needs as a guide."

With this in mind Rev. Gilkey indicated that it would not be out of order if a moratorium were declared on all church building for a time, until the religions themselves are more nearly able to put forth an adequate outline of what a church or religious structure is really intended to be.

These thoughts were echoed by Rabbi Hershman in the closing major address of the conference when he said: "If we ministers of religion can convince parishioners that religion has relevance for the community and for the times in which we live, then . . . architects can make our church buildings relevant for the community in which we live. The paradox we find ourselves in our great Country is that the freedom for which it stands has become the dissolving solution that has permitted discipline to be weakened by liberties, and goals to be dissipated by the acid of disunity, and idea to be eclipsed by expediency."

"Our buildings," according to Rabbi Hershman, "may be functional and they may be quite useable, but . . . this is not the only function of a religious building. The function of a religious building is to arouse pride, an emotion, a spirit of striving for perfection, a striving for the imitation of God, and with all our building today, we are building for the purpose of arousing a spirit of religiosity or to create a quality of spirituality that is so necessary in a religious building. We are building today for function without ideal, for practicality without harmony, without inner being; for usefulness without a sense of beauty."

Rev. Godfrey Diekmann of St. Johns Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota described one of the current events that emphasizes that we are in a revolutionary generation and at the same time moving toward an acceptable solution to the problem. He referred to the Vatican Two conference called by Pope John and the many changes in design and furnishings that were decided upon and approved by the conference, all of which are intended to bring the church and the needs of man into closer harmony. Rev. Diekmann stated that, "ten to fifteen years ago when he personally advocated some of the ideas endorsed by the conference he became known as somewhat of a heretic while now that these have been OK'd he has recovered his conservative reputation again."

He urged that architects consider that churches represent a horizontal relationship of man to man as well as a vertical relationship of man to God.

The trend of constant change and uncertainty of the action on the church as contrasted with the needs of the modern community and the men who live in it reoccured constantly in the smaller seminars which made up the bulk of the program of the ASCA Conference.

Careful study and evaluation of the function which "probably should be performed by the church and which in some cases is being performed" indicates that many sociological needs which the community fails to perform for its members civically ought to be done by the church. In the ultimate analysis it may be that the need for a sanctuary for Sunday morning worship is really not the most important functional phase of modern church design or modern church activity. This may be the day when the counseling chamber, education facilities, social activities, youth center facilities, and other types of community needs will overshadow the older Sunday-only philosophy of the use of religious buildings, according to both leaders and participants in the several seminars.

A MINOR SEMINARY FOR SOUTH FLORIDA

An article prepared especially for The Florida Architect by

The Most Reverend Coleman F. Carroll
Bishop of the Diocese of Miami

The study and appreciation of unusual and fine architecture has always been of keen interest to me. When I undertook to proceed with the plans I had for the building of a much-needed Minor Seminary in the Southern part of Florida, I did so envisioning the many details that would, of necessity, require a decision on my part, and always hopeful it would be the right one.

As we know, a Chapel for a Minor Seminary presents unique architectural problems not found in most other Churches or Chapels. Here we have a structure designed for the daily spiritual needs of two or three hundred young seminarians whose numbers vary not at all from year end to year end and yet is capable of accommodating three times that number on special occasions. The arithmetic is inexorable. If, for example, each of three hundred students invites two parents, relatives or friends to attend the services in connection with a graduation ceremony, the capacity immediately must be nine hundred or more.

The problem then was to provide for the fixed student population in an atmosphere of intimate participation, esthetically satisfying, spiritually rewarding and liturgically correct, and to provide the same qualities and amenities for the occasional tripled congregation. Apart from the usual architectural considerations of site, orientation, scale, internal and external design and space, choice of materials, and the other factors and elements that go to make up a complete and satisfactory building, the need for this occasional triple expansion without loss of intimacy of participation was the one unusual element which governed the concept of St. John Vianney Minor Seminary Chapel.

The plan is cruciform in shape, inscribed within the limits of a walled square. Some of the elements are high and enclosed, some are low, while others have palm fronds and blue sky for a roof. All are unified so that the low spaces flow into the high space and the open spaces flow into both. The effect is to give a sense of being within a Chapel, whether covered or open, and always being close to the Holy mysteries at the focal point of the altar.

The high nave, in the main arm of the cross, housing the daily congregation and the sanctuary itself, is the dominant element of the whole complex, rising as it does in a soaring flight above the strong earthbound horizontal elements of the surrounding enclosing low transepts in the two cross-arms, the sacristies in the top arm of the cross and the enclosing pierced walls of the four courts open to the sky and the roofed but otherwise open Narthex. These surrounding horizontal elements are human in scale, reflecting their affinity to the very ground upon which they rest, while the high nave seems almost to spring to heaven on strong soaring vertical elements branching into spreading arms supporting the roof, sheltering all beneath.

The Sanctuary is the central focus of this high nave as well as the two flanking low transepts. Following the most recent liturgical recommendations, the altar is not set apart in a distant apse but is in the very center of the total congregational setting. Botticino, Travertine and other exotic marbles are in the flooring, the low reredos, the Communion railings and in the main Altar and the Altar of Reservation.

On the opposite wall, over the main entrance doors appears the large pipe organ, encased in African Mahogany, all designed to be an integral part of the wall itself. Simple, slat-backed, open-end bench type pews are in this same material, as are the recessed facias of the paired concrete vertical piers and the indirect lighting baffles forming a cornice over the opening glass walls on both sides of the nave.

These opening glass walls lead to two of the four landscaped courts on either side. Two minor courts flank the sacristy wing. All are an integral part of the Chapel itself, and though open to the sky are within the Chapel and not outside its limits. They contain ample space for overflow crowds, close to the altar, and are embellished with the beauty of tropical flowers, plants and trees with devotional shrines, reflecting pools, bubbling fountains, Stations of the Cross and a peal of three bronze bells suspended in their own tall structure.

The two low transepts, though furnished with permanent pews to provide for more than double the daily congregational seating and the built-in-confessionals, also open in like manner into these beautiful courts so that the whole space, inside and out, flows one into another as a unified whole.

As a foil to the colorful courts at ground level the upper reaches of the high nave are bedecked with a continuous diadem of sparkling faceted glass. The plain high walls between the glass above and the openings below are hung with the modern banners or tapestries, depicting Saints and Teachers of the Church. A huge fresco treated in the manner of a Drurer engraving or etching is hanging over the broad surface of the plain wall over the Sanctuary.

The structure, itself, is a virile masculine concept in poured-in-place reinforced concrete, faced on the exterior, between exposed structural members with precast panels in marble aggregate. The floors of the aisles are variegated Vermont slate, with colorful terrazo under the pews and in the sacristies. Venetian Terrazza paving was used extensively in the courts and other walks. The Sanctuary marbles were quarried and fabricated in Italy (Carrara).

For those who like figures and dimensions the following may be of interest: The enclosed space—open and covered—is 177′ wide by 197′ long. The high nave is 96′ from door to Sanctuary wall and is 54′ wide. The ceiling soars 48′ above the floor. The height of the overhanging and soaring eaves is 56′ above the ground. Each transept is 56′ long by 33′ wide.

(Architect on this project was Alfred D. Reid Associates of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Artists and artisans who contributed to the interior embellishments were coordinated by Key Enterprises Inc. of Miami.)

Architecture for the Church

By The Venerable J. Ralph Deppen, D..D

(Reprinted from Inland Architect, April 1965)

The alacrity with which the architectural profession and the building industry responded to the late boom in church building is only an eyelash shy of phenomenal. Seldom has a demand been so enthusiastically and profitably supplied. Church building became the fertile field for the architect, and more than should have done so, dressed and spoke in a fashion they deemed appropriate to wooing the newly-rich and respectable client — the church building committee. And now, the American scene is blotched with a plethora of ecclesiastical cliches in architecture. The few and wonderful exceptions give only eloquent proof to the rule.

Too few church building committees and their architects ask seriously and sincerely, "Why and what are we building?" Consequently, the building program is frequently a canny battle of preconceptions or a capitulation to a fad, and the result is a material and spiritual misfortune. No doubt, the fault rests first in the client, but the architect is more than an accessory after the fact.

Can anyone *really* build a church? In a theological sense, the answer is, "No." The Church is the work of God, conceived in His infinite wisdom and built "upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone" . . . The fault in so much of the recent and current building of churches is that both the client and the architect have presumed upon the role of God. The client has had its own peculiar notions about what makes it a church. The architect has been responsive to the client and has essayed to create a material environment which would produce, in a random collection of religious persons, a spiritual experience.

A spiritual experience is not necessarily a good thing. Satan is as spiritual as are Michael and Gabriel. Their differences are moral. And this is what differentiates good from bad, so-called church architecture. That which is moral conforms to what is right, and good church architecture is architecture which conforms to what the Church is.

Good church architecture will not presume to create the Church. Rather, it will strive to achieve an environment in which the People of God can be and become what God wills for them. A good church building is one which is ever prepared to welcome the worship and work of the Body of Christ, but which is ever incomplete without the worshipping Body present.

This is an appeal for reserve, perhaps even austerity. It is not, however, a surrender to sterility. Sterility we already have in the profusion of churches which are so stylized as to do, for their users, all the work of inspiration and devotion according to some preconceived, and usually anachronistic, pattern. Creativity is what the Christian world needs; the spirit and the matter with which to worship and serve God rightly here and now and then. This is the difficult charge an architect faces when he agrees to build a dwelling for the Church. This is the kind of charge which will keep architects creative. And why should a church be less of a challenge to creativity than a motel?

The Architect—Creative Designer

By Alfred Browning Parker, FAIA

A church exists because of people with mutual beliefs. A church in the truest sense never begins with a building. It is a church because of what people believe, not because of carved limestone and elaborate rood screens. While the great monuments of medieval times may excite our imagination and even lead us down primrose paths of imitation, we must remember they came into existence as the byproducts of an intense religious spirit. Many of the architectural features commonly attributed to churches are trappings and expensive ones at that. They are never substitutes for a vital congregation.

Most of us know and are fairly articulate as to what an architect can do. We are not all so knowledgeable as to our limitations. It is not our prerogative to decide the uses to which a church will be put.

If an architect has to decide what the uses of a church should be, he is trying to be a theologian and not a designer. On the other hand, directions from the church to the designer should not be completely fixed, arbitrary *and unchangeable.*

Many designers are fond of saying that a church must proclaim its position in the community. I suggest that such a proclamation need not be a shout, but rather a quiet assertation of strength and refuge.

. . . The major errors we make fall into two categories: The first is the trap of tradition in which a stage set is produced in Gothic manner, Colonial style, historical Byzantine or whatever the antecedents of the individuals and their community. This obeisance leads to the production of monuments to bygone ages. It is considered by many to be the safe, sure way to realize a fitting and proper edifice for the church. The second snare is the self-conscious effort to be different. Church buildings will be different if they successfully solve the manifold problems presented by their members. Difference in this context is admirable and to be sought.

The architect may have his problems should he attempt a calm under-statement of building purpose.

In one instance, on a site bordered by heavily traveled roads, an architect proposed to pull a grassy meadow almost completely over the church in the form of a mound surrounding it with a crown of precast elements. All light entered from the sky. A cross on the earth mound was illuminated by the glow from within the church. The huge berm of grass, dominated by a cross, would eliminate noise, simplify maintenance, reduce cost and emphasize a community presence of repose and harmony with the earth. While the building committee agreed that the project met their theological requirements, solved the site problems, came within the budget and was a serene accommodation to the natural world outside and to the spirit of the thing within, nevertheless the project was never accepted. The imposing church edifice was too firmly fixed in their minds to permit a simple and direct approach.

Every architectural commission is both a trust from the present and a pledge to the future. For obvious reasons this is especially true in a religious assignment. Architects fulfill a noble and traditional function in bringing their best creative efforts to the church.

THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE SYNAGOGUE

. . . As Seen By Some Leading Architects Around The World

PIETRO BELLUSCHI

In America, the synagogue is developing into a complex institution where the multiple manifestations of Judaism can take place in warmth and freedom. There is no architectural tradition to match the Jewish faith. Architects can contribute to a trend by creating spaces which serve their purpose with clarity and nobility . . . The architecture of the snyagogue should be an eloquent expression of the spirit of man.

MARCEL BREUER

A place of worship, simple as it may be, serviceable as it need be, is — or should be — different from a mere place of assembly. Something is happening there which is more than just existence, more than just a social event. An idea is there, an attitude toward faith, an attempt to solve life's problems . . . Modest as it may be, a place of worship seems to demand dignity and serenity as its birthright . . . Its destiny seems to be to express in static material man's drive toward the spiritual.

DAVIS, BRODY AND WISNIEWSKI

Although there is no historic tradition of synagogue design, there are some strong traditions of worship and ritual. Traditionally, the synagogue is different from other places of worship in that it is basically a gathering place for laymen; priests are not required . . . We have, therefore, striven to express architecturally this unit of ritual and congregation by designing spaces which have a central orientation, developing from the circle, the square, the octagon, rather than the rectangle . . . in contrast to the usual axially directed space which sets up an audience to stage relationship.

PERCIVAL GOODMAN

When I first designed a synagogue, it was with no early preparation in our faith. It was not synagogue attendance, not the religious atmosphere of a home, but the Nazi atrocity plus readings in Martin Buber which turned my feelings of vague yearning into a need for a concrete expression of kinship . . . Many synagogues, designed from Florida to Colorado to New England, make me, I suppose, an expert. The conditions motivating the designs are these:

Tradition

We Jews have no tradition of building, but we have a tradition of which synagogue buildings can be based — the service and the congregation. In every building I have designed, it is the way in which the service is carried out which established the whole tone and feeling of the building. And I don't listen passively to the generalities of the committee in finding this tone, but search for myself and find it often where none thought it existed.

Expression

In design and structure, the work must be of our time . . . There can be no question of "modern" or "period" styles. The building cannot be an imitation of some past way . . . Our modern construction ways are what they are, have their own expressive vocabulary, and must be used.

The Service

The people must gather together in the greatest possible intimacy so the prayer arises as if from a single throat . . . The test of the religious service is whether the congregation is participant or merely onlooker. It would appear that the generally required auditorium plan is inferior to the traditional plan and so (with little success) I recommend the latter . . . Parenthetically, the central bimah plan is perhaps the only distinctively Jewish contribution to architectural form.

Sanctity

There is no real difference between the sanctity of the parts of a synagogue structure. Our religion is horizontal . . .

Ritual Appointments

. . . Consider the seven-branched Menorah. Exodus calls for one such candlestick . . . Then why do the architects provide two?

And now just a word why, especially at this time, every architect should lend his hand to God's work. At this time, we of the human condition are in danger of annihilation. Our statesmen have turned out to be politicians, our scientists have developed a demon in a little bottle and don't know how to keep the cork in. To whom shall we turn for guidance? Does Isaiah not give the answer? "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God . . ."

PHILIP JOHNSON

The problem of designing the contemporary synagogue is a nearly impossible one . . . Religious space has always in history been the most exacting and pleasurable to build . . . A Jewish temple is as great a problem. The difficulty comes from the habits of the High Holy Days, when the attendance, shall we say, swells. Now a space is either small or large, but it can hardly act like an accordion . . . Once this hurdle is crossed, the design of a synagogue is the finest problem in architecture, a space where awe and reverence are the prime considerations, an inspiring challenge to the artist. The should's and shouldn'ts of design from this point are the architect's business. The temple as a problem, unlike many Christian churches, is open to talent. The Southern Baptist Church, for example, must have a Colonial steeple. The Jewish Temple merely has to be beautiful. As simple as that.

Art and Ecclesiastical Architecture

By R. H. Havard

Born in South Wales, Great Britain, Mr. R. H. Havard studied at Pembroke College, Oxford; Slade School, University College, London and Art Schools in the British Isles. Winner of several prizes and scholarships including the Rome prize, he is a member of N.S.I.D., an Associate of the Society of Canadian Industrial Designers, a member of the Royal Society of Arts, and a member of the Montreal Art Directors Club.

Mr. Havard lived and painted in Europe, Canada and the United States. His paintings are in a number of private collections as well as in many public buildings including some major works in new churches in Britain.

. . . At the risk of over-simplifying the pattern, a risk demanded by the brevity of available space and because Theology is not the prime purpose of this Journal, it may be said that the first thousand years of the Christian Church's history, that is to say from the collapse of the Roman Empire in the 3-4 Century, A.D., to the early 14th Century, was concerned principally with three main themes: first, the establishment of Rome as the great arbiter of the new Faith; second, the establishment of its revisions of existing pagan practices as the new religion; and third, the indoctrination of its subject peoples with the absolutism of the new dogmas.

Since, as in all ages, the majority of people were illiterate [not merely in comprehension, but literally, since the Dark Ages, quite unacquainted with the written word] it was imperative that a pictorial approach be adopted for the propagation of the new teachings of faith. Decoration of the early church building was, therefore, largely composed of broadly drawn incidents from the Old and New Testaments, with an increasing injection of the miraculous to increase the authority of the Church's leaders. During this period, of complete ignorance of the masses, it was an easy thing, through art, to feed the fears of the superstitious mind.

With the advent of St. Francis and St. Dominic (13th Century) a fresh wind began to move through the Church and men. While St. Francis led the way from abject terror and taught the love of God for all things, St. Dominic began the elevation of education from its then low state to the glory it had once held before the decline of the Classical World. The Church of Rome had successfully established its hegemony over the greater part of the western world and, in its new found assurance, was beginning to tolerate a broader and more gentle interpretation of Faith. Now the arts began to display greater felicity of line and form. Duccio, followed by Giotto, Pisano, Masaccio, Donatello and others, while still expressing pictorially realistic interpretations of the Articles of Faith now opened the way to a flexibility of interpretation not previously possible.

Parallelling the establishment of clerical power in Rome, there was also the establishment of a new aristocracy — the merchant princes of Venice and Florence. These princes, while dominated by the Papal authority, also, through their blood relationships, dominated it and its political policies. Not themselves being cloistered monks, these princes built libraries and treasuries of classical knowledge along much broader lines than did the early monasteries, and as a direct consequence their membership in the Papacy engendered a climate which fanned the early wind of change into a raging storm of ferment culminating in the High Renaissance and the analytical century called the Age of Reason (18th).

A hundred years follow in which enlightenment leads to cynicism and the Art of the Renaissance grows through Baroque into the Rococo. Here, as an expression of the age, the artist is concerned not so much with Faith as with charm, and with decoration as such. It is not merely an accident that by this time Faith had become subordinated to Society, and the impetus of early fervor had become absorbed by a more complex set of social values. This is not applicable only to the 18th Century, it is a continuing stream of change, continuing through the florid effervescence of the Industrial Revolution into the present and on into the new Tomorrows.

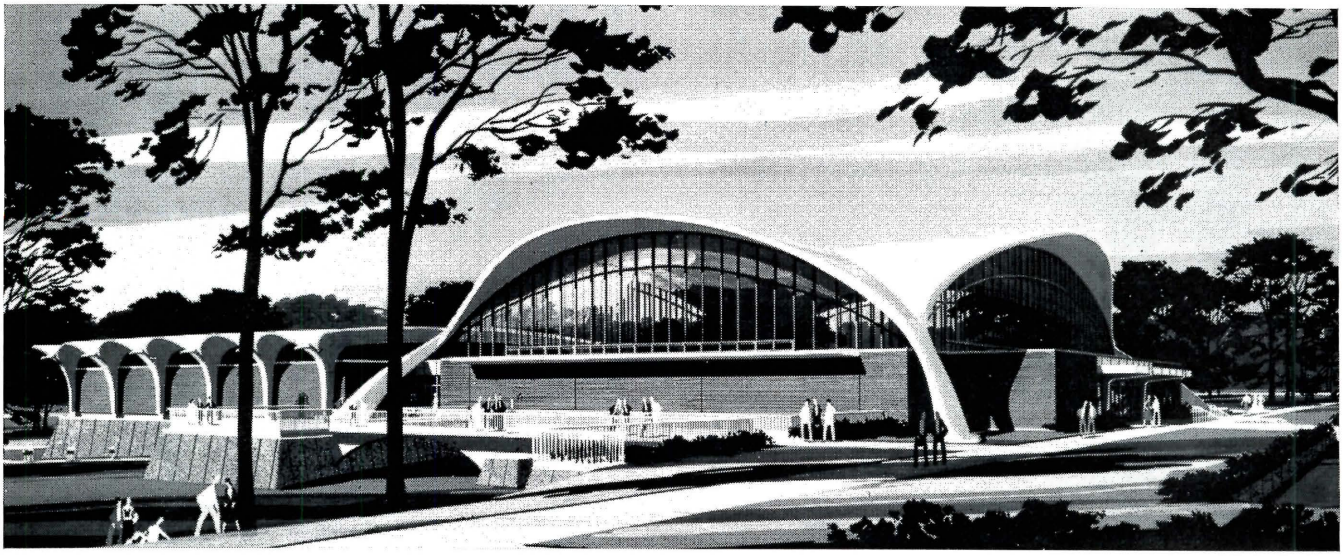
In this present age, more than the Age of Reason, we are concerned with analysis. Everything, including Faith, is being subjected to the microscopic examination of a clinic, and as a consequence the style of artistic decoration is also changed. Consider the Chapel of the Rosary at Vence, designed by Henri Matisse. Here we have the epitome of social commentary at the midpoint of the 20th Century for this chapel was created in 1950-51. This is the period which also sees the Church accept a position in Society as that of a mere social activity and not as a force which forms that Society. Our ecclesiastical construction today, except where it carricatures by exaggeration the Gothic details of the past, is one with office buildings or factories. No attempt is made to furnish an environment conducive to meditation.

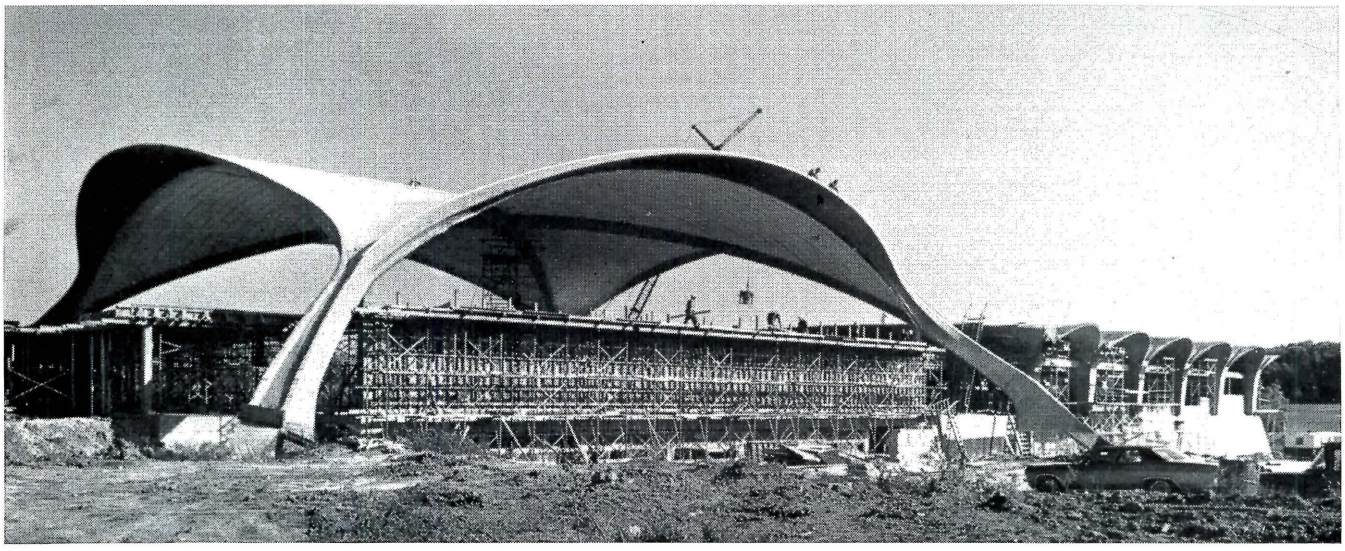
It is significant to note how the changes in architectural and art styles, as well as philosophical concept, reflect the fundamental changes of structure in our Society.

Since architects are concerned with the validity of art in architecture, for they have to justify the expenditure of sometimes large sums of money for this purpose, it should be of interest for them to know that many of the natural and hitherto inescapable dangers which threatened any decoration (subsidence, dampness, and light, to mention a few) have now been, to a substantial extent, removed by means of modern discoveries of Chemistry. Because of these developments, ensuring as they do a longer life for the artwork, it should be a much easier job to persuade Ecclesiastical commissioners to budget for such work than was possible in earlier generations. Had Leonardo da Vinci been able to avail himself of the laminating process, it is almost certain that he would not have used the fresco technique for his famous "Last Supper". Neither would Michael Angelo have prejudiced the survival of his ceiling paintings in the Sistine Chapel through that same, very vulnerable painting method, for with the protective elements of melamine resins, ultra-violet retarders, and high-pressure laminate their creations would still be as fresh and unblemished today as when they were first created instead of the sadly faded and disfigured appearance they, now, actually have.

Art will always have a place in Ecclesiastical Architecture, not only for aesthetic reasons, but also because the propagation of the Faith will always demand a pictorial presentation, and architects should, as an obligation to their clients, make sure that such art work is afforded the longest life possible and ought, therefore, to make use of these new preservative techniques.

Concrete Reflects An Educational Concept





The Leisure and Creative Arts Center is the architectural highlight of the 14 buildings on the all-new campus of George Williams College. Great curving corner ribs, tied together underground with concrete encased post-tensioned tendons of steel, carry the two intersecting concrete barrel vaults for the gymnasium roof. Studios for painting, sculpture, photography and dance are beneath the gymnasium. Post-tensioned concrete ribs, 117′ long, support the concrete vaults over the natatorium. Both gymnasium and natatorium have unobstructed floor areas of 112′ x 112′ under the 4″ thick concrete roofs.

George Williams College is devoted to training leaders for youth groups, community agencies and humanitarian organizations throughout the world. This concept places emphasis on active student participation in many creative areas.

Imaginative design, with a free-form concrete motif, reflects the creativity of the activities to be housed in the Leisure and Creative Arts Center, featured here. This beautiful new structure has combined facilities for gymnastics, swimming and other sports as well as for painting, sculpture, photography and dance.

Here, as in many new trend-setting designs, the fine quality, ready mixed concrete was made with Lehigh Cement. Lehigh Portland Cement Company, Allentown, Pa. District Sales Office : Jacksonville, Fla. 32216.

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Consultant: Dr. William Schnobrich, Urbana, Ill.
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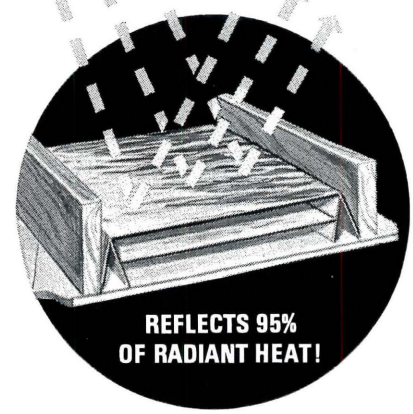

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Next Month in The Florida Architect

ARCHITECTURE AND THE COMPUTER AGE

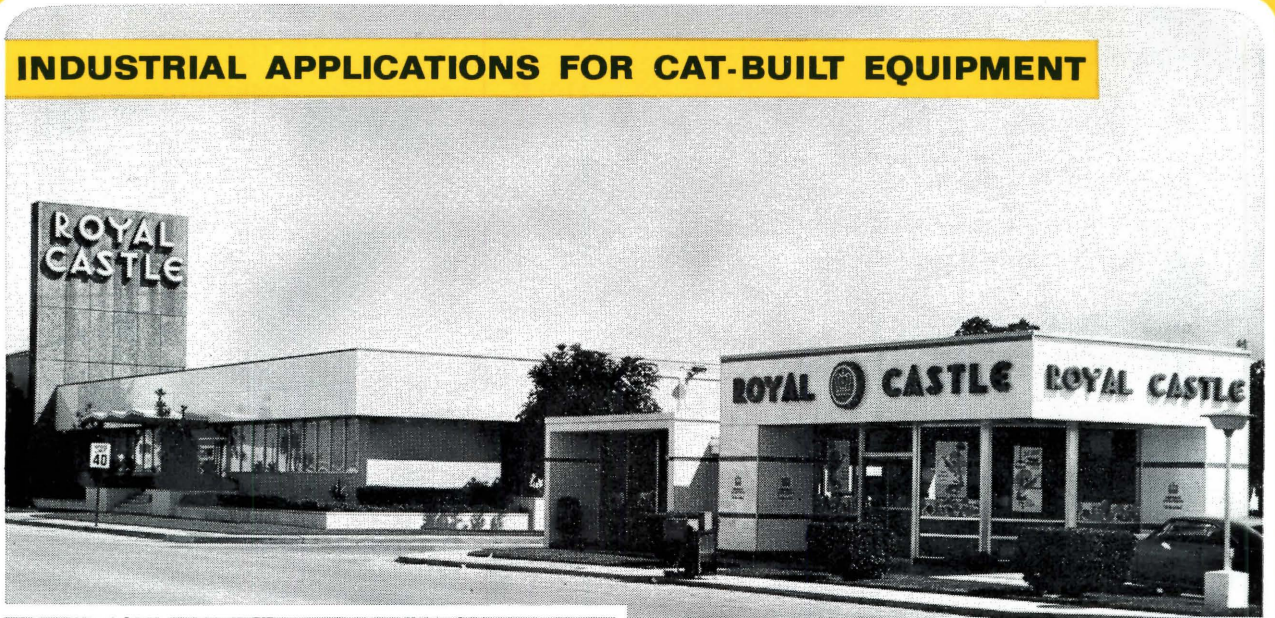
A most interesting report on Computers and how they will — and won't — affect the architectural profession.

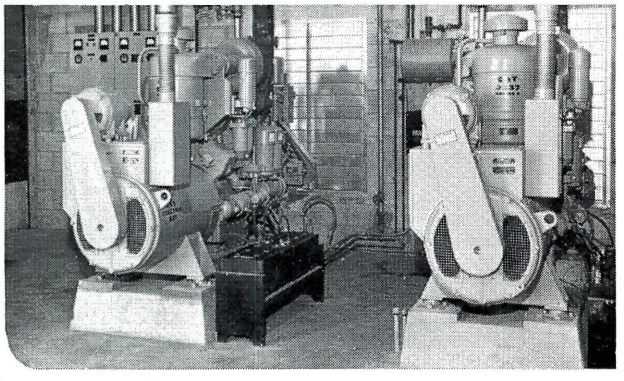
Coming in February . . .

THE ARCHITECT AND HIS EDUCATION

A look at architectural schools and the training of the architect.

INDUSTRIAL APPLICATIONS FOR CAT-BUILT EQUIPMENT





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